

Message Text

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42

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 CU-02 OMB-01 A-01 OPR-02 SY-05

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NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05

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P R 091255Z JAN 76

FM AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6874

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMCONSUL ADANA

AMCONSUL IZMIR

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SUBJ: STUDENT UNREST

REF: 75 ISTANBUL 4009, ANKARA 137

SUMMARY: NEW YEAR OPENED WITH A RESUMPTION OF LEFT-RIGHT CONFRONTATIONS, BOYCOTTS, AND DEMONSTRATIONS ON THE PART OF ISTANBUL UNIVERSITY AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS. WHILE SITUATION SEEMS NOT TO HAVE REACHED LEVEL OF ANKARA STUDENT VIOLENCE, WE ANTICIPATE FURTHER ESCALATION OF ARMED CLASHES. END SUMMARY

1. FOLLOWING A PERIOD OF RELATIVE CALM DURING HOLIDAY SEASON, STUDENTS AT ISTANBUL'S UNIVERSITIES AND TECHNICAL SCHOOLS HAVE RESUMED THE LEFT-RIGHT CONFRONTATIONS, BOYCOTTS AND DEMONSTRATIONS WHICH HAMPERED EDUCATION IN 1975. ISTANBUL TECHNICAL UNIV (ITU) HAS BEEN PRINCIPAL SCENE OF RECENT DISTURBANCES. ON JAN 5 MILITANTS FROM LEFT AND RIGHT ATTACKED ONE ANOTHER IN TWO SEPARATE INCIDENTS AT ITU, RESULTING IN ONE STUDENT SUFFERING FROM BULLET WOUNDS,

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SEVERAL ARRESTS, AND THE STATIONING OF A POLICE TEAM TO SEARCH

SUSPECT STUDENTS. THESE SEARCHES, WHICH LEFTIST STUDENTS CLAIM ARE DIRECTED ONLY AGAINST "PROGRESSIVES" WHILE RIGHTIST "COMMANDOS" REMAIN UNTOUCHED, HAVE SPARKED ADDITIONAL INCIDENTS THROUGHOUT THE WEEK,

FORCING AUTHORITIES TO RECESS ITU UNTIL JAN 12.

2. OTHER INCIDENTS HAVE OCCURRED AT ISTANBUL UNIV (IU) FACULTY OF LET-

TERS, THE ACADEMY OF ACCOUNTING AND BUSINESS, AND AT THE KADIKOY ATATURK EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE. LEFTIST GROUPS HELD "FORUMS" IN ALL THESE PLACES TO PROTEST KILLING OF ANKARA STUDENT SUKRU BULUT BY "FASCISTS." ALTHOUGH NO INJURIES OCCURRED IN JAN 8 PROTESTS, HEAVY SHOOTING WAS REPORTED AS POLICE MOVED IN TO QUELL DISTURBANCE. THESE INSTITUTIONS HAVE BEEN RECESSED INDEFINITELY WHILE AUTHORITIES DETERMINE MEASURES TO DEAL WITH FUTURE INCIDENTS.

3. RIGHT AND LEFTIST GROUPS HAVE ALSO CONDUCTED, OR PLAN TO CONDUCT PROTEST MARCHES IN TAKSIM SQUARE. THE CONSERVATIVE TURKISH NATIONAL STUDENTS UNION (MTTB) MUSTERED A FEW THOUSAND STUDENTS IN TAKSIM JAN 3 TO CONDEMN COMMUNISTS. IN RESPONSE LEFTIST TURKISH SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY (TSWP) HAS SCHEDULED A "MARCH FOR DEMONCRACY" ON JAN 10 IN TAKSIM. POLICE EXPECT TWO TO THREE THOUSAND SYMPATHIZERS TO TAKE PART. WHILE ANTI-AMERICANISM IS NOT EXPECTED TO BE AN ISSUE, THE CONGEN WILL CONTINUE TO TAKE NECESSARY PRECAUTIONS.

COMMENT: WHILE ISTANBUL HAS BEEN FORTUNATE IN RECENT WEEKS TO HAVE AVOIDED AMOUNT OF BLOODSHED REPORTED FROM ANKARA, UPSURGE IN STUDENT ACTIVISM TOGETHER WITH THE AVAILABILITY OF FIREARMS SUGGESTS THAT WE CAN EXPECT A NEW, PERHAPS EVEN MORE VIOLENT, CYCLE OF LEFT-RIGHT CONFRONTATIONS.

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